

Education tax pinches \$23 more

by Eric Elstone
Halton Hills residents can expect to pay about \$23 more in school taxes this year, according to town treasurer Ray King.

Using preliminary figures a Georgetown homeowner will pay the least at \$320. Esquing the most at \$323 and Acton in the middle at \$321.

The mill rate combines the financial needs of the elementary and high schools in each area. In Georgetown the mill rate is 56.77 which when multiplied by an average home assessment of \$5,638 produces the tax amount.

Acton's mill rate is 71.46 with an assessment of \$4,438.

Esquing's assessment is put at \$4,638 and the mill rate is 69.77.

Last year the Georgetown homeowner paid \$297 in school taxes, Esquing \$300 and Acton about \$297.

Final figures on the education tax depend on the setting of the region's levy, Mr. King said. Halton Hills may strike its budget this week.

Halton Board of Education approved its \$93,781,195 budget Thursday, but only after

three tries at changing the figures. Most of the money is spent on wages—teachers and other staff—plant operation.

Slightly more than half the revenue—50.58 per cent—comes from provincial grants while 46 per cent comes out of Halton taxpayers' wallets. Sources for the balance of the revenue include tuition fees, rentals, and property sales.

While the percentage of provincial government grants is down for elementary and secondary schools this year, the number of dollars coming into Halton from Queen's Park is up.

There is a total of \$2.85 million more dollars for Halton this year from the province for elementary and high schools. That figure, because of the increase in the size of the school budget, however represents slightly less than last year's percentage.

General legislative grants produce revenue representing 50.58 per cent of total expenditures this year compared to last year's 51.41 per cent.

Of the \$43 million which municipalities share responsibility in raising, Halton Hills

pays 11.77 per cent, Milton 9.43, Oakville 34.45 and Burlington 44.35.

Oakville separate school trustee Len Auger failed in his bid to slice \$414,000 from the secondary school costs to bring it in line with provincial ceilings. He said trends appear to have higher and higher costs while secondary school enrolment drops, Auger said. This is the first budget to see Halton slip above the provincial limit.

Board finance committee chairman Rev. Gary Morton said he could identify with Mr. Auger's sentiments, but continued by saying he did not know where that kind of money could be found.

Another trustee, Burlington's Bill Priestner, challenged the administration to run a tighter ship. "Perhaps the \$400,000 will be found through the year in the operation," he said.

Another amendment would have seen the elementary school budget rise closer to the provincial ceiling. Oakville trustee Anne Fairfield said because the elementary schools are some \$53 below the ceiling indicates the staff is not being used as best it may. Mrs.

Fairfield proposed that all elementary schools have full-time secretaries, rather than part-time, so that principals, who now perform some secretary duties, can devote more time for their jobs. The amendment, which also failed, was aimed at small schools with no assistant principals.

Yet another amendment took aim at the question of whether a new board of trustees is bound to their predecessors' decisions. One part of the budget followed up an old needs assessment study which called for the hiring of a psychologist and four psychometricians. Total cost \$25,282.

Oakville trustee Len Crosier wanted the psych-item dropped from the budget. Discussion of his amendment revealed approval of the five people in the budget does not translate automatically into hiring. Board superintendent of special services Ron Chapman said no hiring was to be done until he returns to trustees with a specific request.

All trustees except Crosier and Oakville's Elsie Hilson voted in favor of passing the budget.

Some drugs found pharmacy busted again

Acton Pharmacy was again the target of break and enter thieves. Halton Regional Police say the pharmacy's south door was again smashed during Saturday night's theft which netted thieves two bottles of Hycodan. No charges have been laid.

About \$200 worth of drugs was stolen from the same drug store on March 8. Police link that theft with a drug overdose incident which sent 18 North Halton youths to hospitals.

Police charged two more Acton men in connection with the March 8 break in. Soon after the theft police arrested a woman and a

man with break and entry plus possession of stolen goods.

Meanwhile police recovered part of the loot from the first theft. Behind an Acton home an officer found about 200 Serax pills. About ten times that amount was believed in circulation after the theft.

Two juveniles were also charged in the March 8 incident. Eight Acton youths suffering drug effects were taken to Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital the evening after the break-in. Police suspect ten students, on a school bus from here and Milton, also suffered the effects of drugs. They were taken to hospitals and later released.

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BH Coats, left, discusses downtown Acton with architect Lloyd Sankey, right, who unveiled a plan to revitalize the downtown core at a BIA meeting last Wednesday.

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"1978 has been somewhat less spectacular than the two previous years, but we have embarked on a number of projects," retiring Business Improvement Area board of management chairman Henry Stachyra told about 50 members of the BIA and guests at the BIA's annual meeting last Wednesday.

He said the first improvement in 1978 was demolition of the Hatcher's building and construction of a parking lot, and arrangements were made for the beautification of Main St. S., delayed by failure to get necessary approvals. This has been settled now and work is to begin as soon as weather permits and a contractor found.

Third project undertaken was arrangements for entrance signs at all four entrances to Acton. They'll be two faced and illuminated and landscaping will be done with the BIA bearing half the cost. Remainder of the money will be raised by different service clubs whose emblems will appear on the signs. Don Lindsay co-ordinated the project and reported co-operation from service clubs was good. A committee has been formed, design made and modified to meet Ministry of Transportation and Communication requirements.

The BIA also provided



Henry Kroes (left) of the Acton Red Cross group puts a bandaid on R. Lee after he gave blood for the 36th time last Tuesday. Joan Ford of the Red Cross took the opportunity to present him with his 35th donation certificate.

Best ever clinic

The Acton Red Cross group had their best-ever blood donor clinic last Tuesday, bringing in 182 pints of blood and 18 rejects.

Public relations officer Alice Scriber pointed out a story on the front page of the Acton Free Press the week before the clinic was responsible for bringing in a goodly portion of the donors. Many, she said, saw the article explaining they may have to cancel all future clinics if more donors do not come out, and said they felt ashamed of themselves.

All workers were very pleased with the clinic, said Mrs. Scriber. The clinic was such a success, she said, head office in Toronto telephoned them offering congratulations.

At the last clinic, only 103 pints of blood were received with 17 rejects.

Tuesday's clinic was sponsored by Halton Hills Furniture and Appliances and A-B Supermarket.

The next clinic will be held June 12 at the Acton Legion.

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